

Remarks

Objections to Claims

The Examiner has objected to claim 6 as containing allowable subject matter but dependent upon a rejected claim. The Applicants have canceled claim 6 rendering the objection to this claim moot.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-5 and 17-24 as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) by United States patent number 6,278,468 issued to Watrobski et al, hereinafter referred to as Watrobski. The Applicant respectfully requests careful consideration of the following explanations regarding the rejections of claims 1-5 and 17-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Rejections of Claims 1-5 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 1 has been amended to include limitations from claim 6, indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter. The Applicant respectfully submits that a valid prima facie anticipation rejection of the amended claim 1 with respect to Watrobski is not present for at least this reason. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Claims 2-5 are dependent, either directly or indirectly, upon the amended claim 1 and therefore include all the limitations of the amended claim 1. For at least the reason that a valid prima facie anticipation rejection of the amended claim 1 with respect to Watrobski is not present, a valid prima facie anticipation rejection of claims 2-5 with respect to Watrobski is not present.

Rejections of Claim 17 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 17 has been amended to include limitations from claim 6, indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter. The Applicant respectfully submits that a valid prima facie anticipation rejection of the amended

claim 17 with respect to Watrobski is not present for at least this reason. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Rejections of Claims 18-24 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 18 has been amended to include limitations from claim 6, indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter. The Applicant respectfully submits that a valid prima facie anticipation rejection of the amended claim 18 with respect to Watrobski is not present for at least this reason. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Claims 19-24 are dependent upon the amended claim 18 and therefore include all the limitations of the amended claim 18. For at least this reason, valid prima facie anticipation rejections of claims 18-24 with respect to Watrobski are not present. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of claims 18-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Rejections of Claims 32-33 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 32-33 as obvious over Watrobski in view of United States patent number 6,957,879, issued to Moriyama et al (hereinafter referred to as Moriyama).

Claim 32 has been amended to include limitations from claim 6, indicated by the Examiner as containing allowed subject matter. The Applicant respectfully submits that a valid prima facie obviousness rejection of the amended claim 32 with respect to Watrobski and Moriyama is not present for at least this reason. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claim 33 is dependent upon the amended claim 32 and therefore includes all the limitations of the amended claim 32. For at least this reason, a valid prima facie obviousness rejection of claim 33 with respect to Watrobski and Moriyama is not present. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of claim 33 under 35 U.S.C. §

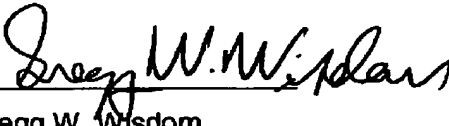
103(a).

Conclusion

The Applicants respectfully contend that claims 1-5 and 7-33 are in a condition for allowance. Such allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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